

[25th August 1925]

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" I think, as to the general remarks made by the hon. Member I must say that he is not at all justified and, as regards the specific question put, we have given the answer."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR :—" May I know if the Government do not think it advisable to call for the information ? "

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" It will be considered."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" May I ask how I am not justified in my remark seeing that we have been told that Government's aim is total prohibition at least at some distant future."

Location of toddy shops in Vellalore village, Coimbatore taluk.

* 374 Q.—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : Will the hon. the Minister for Education be pleased to state—

(a) whether there is any rule that no toddy or arrack shop should be located near the place of a weekly market or at or near a public road ;

(b) whether it is a fact that a toddy shop is located very near the weekly market at Vellalore in Coimbatore taluk close to the public road leading to it and that an arrack shop also is located in the same village on the other side of the market ;

(c) what is the population of the village ;

(d) whether it is a fact that there have been always several factions in the village and there have been murders and other offences among these factions and there have been several criminal cases and security proceedings even recently ;

(e) whether it is a fact that on the recommendation of the police, the shops had to be temporarily closed last year ;

(f) whether it is a fact that one of the factions consists largely of Pallars who live in the village in very large numbers and who have generally no means of livelihood excepting coolie work ;

(g) whether it is a fact that there are several other toddy and arrack shops within two or three miles from the village ; and

(h) whether any suggestion has been made that either of the shops or both of them may be permanently closed ; whether the Government have any objection to go into the matter carefully and pass final orders about the closure of the shops ?

A.—(a) The departmental rules require that rural shops should not, except in special circumstances, be located within a furlong of a metalled road and should be away from market places, etc.

(c) 6,549 according to the census of 1921.

(b) & (d) to (g) The Government have no information.

(h) No suggestion has been received by Government.

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" With reference to the answer to clause (a), may I know whether the special circumstances referred to in that rule have been defined and if so, what they are ? "

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The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" Except in special circumstances, the departmental rules require that rural shops should not be located within a furlong of a metalled road and should be away from market places, etc. If there are any special circumstances to show that the locality demands it or that the people want it, in such cases an exception would be made."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" My question is what those special circumstances are. Have they been defined in those departmental rules or have they been left to the discretion of the local excise officers?"

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" I have illustrated one such reason, Sir. But the discretion is left to the local officers to decide whether there are special circumstances necessitating contravention of the rules."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" I would put the question again, Sir. I want to know whether the special circumstances have been defined in the rules? I want this information to enable me to judge for myself whether in particular cases the rules have been abused or not?"

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" If there are abuses of the rules, certainly they will be considered."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" Sir, I shall repeat my question. What I want to know is whether the special circumstances have been defined in the rules, so that in each case I may know if the rules have been strictly adhered to."

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" As I said, the rules give discretion to the local officers."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR :—" May I bring to the notice of the hon. the Minister that there is not one shop in Madras which does not militate against the provisions of the Excise Manual?"

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" I am afraid I cannot accept that as a very accurate statement."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR :—" Will he kindly examine the question and correct me if I am wrong?"

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" Every shop in the City of Madras has to be located in some house which opens into the street."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR :—" It is not only with regard to the question of opening into the streets but there are certain other rules framed so far as the City of Madras is concerned and all those rules are transgressed in the matter of location of shops."

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" If any specific rule has been transgressed in any particular manner in any particular place, certainly I am willing to have inquiries made; but a general order like that is too much for any department to carry out."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR :—" It is not at all difficult to give a specific instance seeing that all the shops in the City of Madras are located against the provisions of the Excise Manual."

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The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ There is the Licensing Board for giving advice with regard to the location of shops in the City of Madras.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR :—“ Even in cases where the Licensing Board refused permission, I may remind the hon. the Minister that the Board of Revenue have interfered and given permission.”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ The Licensing Board recommended that certain shops should be abolished. Those shops were accordingly abolished and the Government approved the order.”

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—“ May I ask the hon. the Minister whether he remembers that as regards the location of a toddy shop at Polur, North Arcot district, in spite of the fact that it is on the junction of four roads and that it is on the road leading to the railway station near the school, factory, etc., I thrice interpellated the matter and the answer was that the Government had no information ? ”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“ With reference to clause (a), the rules require that the shops should be located away from the market places, etc. May I know if any minimum distance has been fixed, or, even there, discretion is given to the local officers ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ It should be a furlong away from a metalled road.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“ I have read that portion of the answer. My question is if any minimum distance has been fixed with respect to the location of a shop near a market place ? ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ At a reasonable distance from the market place.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“ I suppose it is reasonable distance according to the discretion of the local officers ? Then, Sir, as regards (b) and (d) to (g), the Government say that they have no information. I have made myself responsible for the allegation made in this question, viz., that it is close to a road, close to a market, etc., and still would Government say that they have no information and that they do not care to obtain the information ? ”

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—“ With reference to (h), may I know why it is that side doors and secret windows are being allowed in the toddy and arrack shops where they give the people drink even after the closing hours ? (Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti : ‘ Hear, hear ’). ”

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—“ There are several ways by which wicked men transgress the rules, and, if such instances are brought to the notice of the Government, the officers in charge will take action and book the culprits.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTIYAR :—“ May I remind the hon. the Minister that Rev. D. G. M. Leith brought to his notice a case of transgression of the law some time back ? May I know what action he took on his representation ? ”

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The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" That question was answered six months back and action was taken against the man alleged to have transgressed the rules."

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" Sir, I myself brought to his notice an instance of an unlicensed toddy shop and the newspapers also drew prominent attention to it."

The hon. the DEPUTY PRESIDENT :—" Will the hon. Member kindly put a question ?"

Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR :—" I beg to point out to the hon. the Minister that I brought an instance of an unlicensed shop to the notice of his department and no remedy was forthcoming."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know if the hon. the Minister has had time to think over my question and will he kindly call for the information required in clauses (b) and (d) to (g) ?"

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" I have not been convinced of the necessity for it ; but if the hon. Member wants it, certainly I shall obtain the information."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" Thanks, Sir. Whether he is convinced of the necessity for the information or not, I am very thankful for the answer. I do want the answer and if he goes through the information, I am sure he will find that he should be thankful to me for putting this question."

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—" Sir, may I know if the officials who usually go and inspect these liquor shops do not all bring such malpractices to the notice of the Government, malpractices such as having secret doors and windows in the shops ?"

The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" The officers always take note of such commissions and they punish the shopkeepers."

Local Boards and Municipal Councils.

The strength of the district board of South Arcot.

11-30 a.m. * 375 Q.—Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR : Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) the total strength of the district board of South Arcot as it stood on the 1st August 1925, together with the names of the members and their castes ;

(b) the number of Muhammadan and Adi-Dravida members thereof ; and

(c) whether any particular community is over-represented in that body, and if so, the name of that community and its strength ?

A.—(a), (b) & (c) A list^a is laid on the table.

Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR :—" Sir, in the list printed, there is not even one Muhammadan. In view of the fact that recently there has occurred a vacancy, has the hon. Minister any intention of nominating a Muhammadan ?"

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—" It has already been the intention of Government."

^a Printed as Appendix II on pages 729-730 infra.